



STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
POST OFFICE BOX 94064, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9064
Toll Free #: 1-877-453-2721
<http://www.louisianaschools.net>

Memorandum

To: Chief State School Officers

From: Cecil J. Picard *CJP*
State Superintendent of Education

Date: November 30, 2005

Subject: Louisiana Diplomas for Displaced Students

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has voted to allow students who relocated to other states due to the hurricanes to receive Louisiana diplomas during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years. The purpose of this memo is to provide preliminary information to assist students and school officials in making scheduling decisions.

The following provides a broad outline of the process:

- Schools distribute the attached flyer to displaced Louisiana juniors and seniors.
- The current school counselor notifies the Louisiana Department of Education of the student's decision by supplying the student's name, social security number or date of birth, and former school on an electronic form on our website (www.louisianaschools.net).
- After the student completes the necessary courses, the current school counselor sends the transcript to the student's home district. Instructions for submitting the transcript electronically will soon be available on our website. A paper transcript may be submitted if preferred.
- The home district will evaluate the transcript and send the diploma to the student's current school.
- Students needing to take the Louisiana Graduation Exit Exam (GEE) will be provided three opportunities to take the GEE online in Spring 2006. More information will be provided regarding the online administration as plans are completed.

We appreciate your assistance in disseminating this information to Louisiana students attending schools in your state. A flyer for students is enclosed for your convenience. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Beben of my staff at 225-342-1152, toll free at 1-877-453-2721, or by e-mail at nancy.beben@la.gov.

CJP:SN:nb

Attachment

c: Robin G. Jarvis, Ph.D.
Scott Norton, Ph.D.

Louisiana Juniors & Seniors

GRADUATION INFORMATION

If you are a former Louisiana student displaced in another state due to Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita, you have several options for high school graduation. These questions and answers can help you decide what your options are and how to proceed.

1. **What are my options for high school graduation?**

You may earn a high school diploma from the state where you are now residing or you may earn a Louisiana high school diploma if you meet the Louisiana graduation requirements, through the Distance Diploma program.

2. **Who is eligible for the Distance Diploma program?**

Students are eligible if they are former Louisiana public school students displaced due to Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita, and they plan to graduate this year (2005-2006) or next year (2006-2007). Displaced students who have completed course requirements but need to retake the Graduation Exit Examination (GEE) are also eligible.

3. **If I want to earn the Louisiana diploma, what are the requirements?**

You must earn 23 "Carnegie units" (course credits) and pass the Louisiana Graduation Exit Examination (GEE).

4. **How do I get started?**

See your guidance counselor to sign up. The guidance counselor should login to the Louisiana Department of Education website, <http://www.louisianaschools.net/>, and click on "Distance Diplomas" to help you sign up.

5. **How can I take the Louisiana Graduation Exit Examination (GEE) if I am out of state?**

- The GEE will be offered in an online format (GEE Online) beginning this spring. Check our website at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/> for updates about GEE online.
- After you sign up for the Distance Diploma program, you will register for the GEE in January.
- You will be able to take the GEE three times this year—January 2006, March 2006, and June 2006.

6. **How will I get my diploma?**

- Your Louisiana diploma will be sent to your current school.
- The diploma will have the name of your former Louisiana school.
- Check with your current school counselor or administrator regarding participation in graduation ceremonies.

7. **Will I be able to receive TOPS?**

For information on possible waivers of TOPS requirements for students displaced by the hurricanes and any other questions related to TOPS, call the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance at 800-259-5626 or check their website at <http://www.osfa.state.la.us/>.

8. **Who can I contact for more information?**

Contact the Louisiana Department of Education toll free at: 1-877-453-2721 or look us up on the web at www.louisianaschools.net.

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of the education programs or activities that it operates, including employment and admission related to such programs and activities. This LDE is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations not to engage in such discrimination. LDE's Title IX Coordinator is Patrick Weaver, Deputy Undersecretary, LDE, Exec. Office of the Supct. PO Box 94064, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064, 877-453-2721 or customerservice@la.gov. All inquiries pertaining to LDE's policy prohibiting discrimination based on sex or to the requirements of Title IX and its implementing regulations can be directed to Patrick Weaver or to the USDE, Asst. Sec. for Civil Rights.